

#### Members

Sen. Murray Clark, Chairperson  
Sen. Robert Meeks  
Sen. Ron Alting  
Sen. Billie Breaux  
Sen. Connie Sipes  
Sen. Frank Mrvan  
Rep. Gregory Porter  
Rep. Richard Bodiker  
Rep. Clyde Kersey  
Rep. Robert Behning  
Rep. Robert Hoffman  
Rep. Phyllis Pond



## INTERIM STUDY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION ISSUES

*Legislative Services Agency*  
200 West Washington Street, Suite 301  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2789  
Tel: (317) 232-9588 Fax: (317) 232-2554

#### LSA Staff:

Jeanette Adams, Attorney for the Committee  
Irma Reinumagi, Attorney for the Committee  
Dave Hoppmann, Fiscal Analyst for the Committee  
Mark Goodpaster, Fiscal Analyst for the Committee

Authority: Legislative Council Resolution 99-1  
(Adopted May 26, 1999)

### MEETING MINUTES<sup>1</sup>

Meeting Date: October 7, 1999  
Meeting Time: 1:00 P.M.  
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington St., Room 125  
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana  
Meeting Number: 3

**Members Present:** Sen. Murray Clark, Chairperson; Sen. Robert Meeks; Sen. Ron Alting; Sen. Connie Sipes; Sen. Frank Mrvan; Rep. Gregory Porter; Rep. Richard Bodiker; Rep. Clyde Kersey; Rep. Robert Behning; Rep. Robert Hoffman.

**Members Absent:** Sen. Billie Breaux; Rep. Phyllis Pond.

### PART 1. THE TEACHING OF READING

**Senator Murray Clark, Chairperson,** called the meeting to order, and introduced **Dr. Roger Farr, Executive Director, Indiana University Center for Innovation in Assessment,** who had testified at the second meeting concerning the Governor's Grade 1 Reading Assessment. Dr. Farr distributed written material on the assessment plus a statement of the International Reading Association on the role of phonics in reading instruction (Exhibit A). Dr. Farr stated that there is strong support in research for teaching phonics directly and in an applied manner to unlock meaning. There has been debate about the best method to teach reading since the days of the McGuffey reader, and the

---

<sup>1</sup> Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.ai.org/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

debate will not go away. What is important is that all teachers must be provided with a full toolbox of strategies for the teaching of reading.

**Terry Spradlin, Legislative Liaison, Department of Education (DOE)** presented written materials concerning DOE's reading recommendations to the Committee (Exhibit B).

These include:

1. Create a task force of experts on reading to give advice at the state level on methods of teaching and assessment.
2. Have the task force develop a "phonics tool kit" for elementary teachers.
3. Create a reading specialist or reading program director in DOE to work with the task force and schools of education. (There was discussion as to whether DOE has current budget resources to implement this proposal.)
4. Establish an "Indiana Reads" day to promote the value of reading.
5. Provide ongoing support for DOE's reading and literacy initiative, including early intervention programs, library book purchases, and adult literacy programs.

**Senator Clark** stated that there were several possible solutions to improving instruction in the teaching of reading, including the SB 457-1999 approach of mandating a certain number of hours of instruction at the undergraduate level, mandating certain components in the elementary school curriculum, controlling at the teacher certification level, or doing nothing.

**Tom Hanson, Director of Legal and External Affairs, Indiana Professional Standards Board (IPSP)**, described the new licensure system that will focus not on what a graduate has studied in college but rather on the potential teacher's ability to perform in a classroom. He also wanted to correct a statement at a previous meeting to inform the Committee that under the new system there will continue to be an equivalent credential to that of the current "reading specialist".

Mr. Hanson stated that the IPSB has looked at elementary standards and has "beefed up" the content area to make it tool specific, especially in phonics. Three themes were integrated into every standard at every grade and subject: technology, exceptional needs students, and diverse learners. Now the IPSB is adding another integrated theme, reading, to every standard for every grade and subject. (Safety is also being added as a fifth integrated theme.)

Under the new licensure system, the IPSB does not mandate curriculum to colleges. The colleges will put a stamp of approval on their teacher "product", and the IPSB will care only about the person's assessments and competency, not credit hours. The system includes "sticks" to insure that higher education does a good job of training teachers, including probation, loss of accreditation, and loss of access to federal student loan money.

Mr. Hanson made the following requests to the Committee:

1. Change the statute to implement the new licensure system (called "the induction program") one year earlier.
2. Provide funding for induction program mentors. (Currently funding is provided for mentors in the internship program.)

**Larry Smith, Chairman, Elementary Education Department, Ball State University,** remarked that he was told by the Superintendent of Washington Township Schools, Marion County, (where teachers had to receive phonics training) that veteran teachers, not new teachers, had the greatest need of professional development for teaching phonics. He also stated that all instructors at Ball State do teach phonics, but some treat the subject more lightly than others. There is some work to be done at the university level in training

teachers. There are some people who should not be teachers. Ball State tries to remove them from the program before they get to the student teaching level. Students do actual work in classrooms beginning at the freshman/sophomore level.

**Sharon Barnett, School Board Member, Washington Township Schools, Marion County**, stated that in Washington Township, new teachers also did not know how to teach phonics. She expressed two concerns with the IPSB new system of licensure:

- (1) Some teachers will work in the upper primary grades, get a license, and then teach in the lower primary grades. Yet in the upper grades they will not have needed to show skills in teaching reading. (Mr. Hanson, IPSB, stated that this is a concern of the IPSB.)
- (2) Under the new system, teachers will be evaluating/ assessing each other. (Mr. Hanson's response was that portfolios will be assessed objectively by teachers who do not know the person being evaluated.)

**Roger Thornton, Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents**, suggested that schools might develop a test to screen teacher applicants for knowledge before hiring them. Chairman Clark directed Mr. Hanson to work with Mr. Thornton on this idea.

**Kelly Bentley, School Board Member, Indianapolis Public Schools**, commented that it was good to have this dialogue occurring, especially for children with disadvantages. It is important that colleges educate future teachers to help the urban student.

**Nancy Papas, Indiana State Teachers Association**, observed that there is a serious need for professional development, especially in such subjects as phonics, learning disabilities, and reading technology. Professional development is a key part of the full toolbox. Funding is needed for professional development and to teach the technological solutions that do exist. The IPSB performance based approach to teacher licensure is a good idea, and they have enforcement powers to deny accreditation to people who are not qualified for licensure.

**Committee Members made statements which yielded the following potential findings for the final report:**

1. Teachers should have a full toolbox and should be taught in college all known modern methods for teaching reading. However, this topic does not lend itself to more specific recommendations from a legislative study committee.
2. There should be a K-16 approach to reading.
3. There is a constant need for ongoing teacher professional development.
4. There is a need for interested parties in the matter of the teaching of reading to better communicate and work together. There is a need for a task force type collaborative effort.
5. There is a sense of the Committee that there is no support for mandating college curriculum.

**Chairman Clark** will have a Resolution/ Bill for discussion at the next meeting on the subject of teaching reading. Other members who wish to have proposed bills prepared should contact the Committee staff in the near future.

## **PART 2. SCHOOL SAFETY/ VIOLENCE**

**Concerning student screening**, the Committee rejected **PD 4804-1999** (proposed at an earlier meeting) which provides for the screening of potentially dangerous students by school psychologists. Members felt that this is a home rule issue for each school to decide

for itself. It would also be a mandated expenditure that many schools would have difficulty funding. Finding qualified persons to do the testing, especially in rural areas, would be difficult as there are under 400 licensed school psychologists working today in Indiana schools.

**Frank Bush, Indiana School Boards Association**, objected to PD 4804-1999 on the grounds that the draft leaves the schools out of the process. Once the school makes the referral, only the parents and the psychologists are involved.

**Amy Cook Lurvey, COVOH**, stated that she did not favor the draft but that it does illustrate the poor state of child mental health services in Indiana.

**Senator Meeks** suggested that improving the ratio to school counselors to students would be a better approach to aiding troubled students.

**Concerning gun incidents in schools**, information on this subject is published in the annual "school report card". Incidents usually involve possession, not violence or weapon use. DOE does not collect follow-up information on what happens to kids who are found with guns in schools. Attorney General Modisett will be providing this information to the Committee.

**Concerning school emergency planning**, general discussion occurred on the subject of the plans for manmade emergencies that each school is required to have in place for the 2000-2001 school year. (Plans are already in place for naturally caused emergencies.) Each school must have its own plan. All plans must be coordinated with local law enforcement and be reviewed and cleared at the state level. DOE conducts workshops and gives guidance. County safety commissions help small schools and model plans are available for their use. The plans are both proactive and reactive. Training will focus on the identification of situations and prevention of problems. In short, the issue of school safety planning has been addressed. There are adequate resources and support for all schools. DOE, in response to a request from members, will provide the Committee with model and sample plans.

**Sharon Barnett, School Board Member, Washington Township Schools, Marion County**, complimented DOE on its safety seminars around the state. The Committee should consider providing money for the costs of implementing the safety plans. Terry Spradlin stated that DOE will continue to monitor need and resources.

**Concerning recommendations from DOE, Terry Spradlin** distributed written materials (Exhibit C) containing DOE's recommendations to improve student safety. These are:

1. Enact legislation to require accredited schools to notify the Superintendent of Public Instruction of any school personnel holding a teacher license issued by the IPSB who is convicted of a crime specified in IC 20-6.1-3-7(b). (IC 20-6.1-3-7(a) requires the Superintendent to notify the IPSB to begin license revocation, but there is currently no mechanism to inform the Superintendent when to act.)
2. Provide schools with resources to acquire equipment to enhance school safety such as access control, intruder detection, radio systems, telephone systems, hotlines, cameras, Internet security, etc. The current School Safety/ Safe Haven fund may need to be increased from current levels in future biennia to address this need.

**Staff was directed to prepare the following preliminary drafts on the safety issue:**

1. Recommendation #1 of DOE modified to also require courts to provide information on licensed person who are charged and convicted.

2. The recommendation of Attorney General Modisett (meeting #1) to require schools to notify law enforcement when a student is found with a firearm and to require more open disclosure of student violations to the community.

The final meeting is scheduled for October 28 at 1:00 PM in Room 125 of the State House. At this meeting, members will review drafts and adopt the final report to the Legislative Council. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.